

EXHIBIT 4

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Panel recommends sharp penalty for misconduct by justice of peace

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PHOENIX— A Scottsdale justice of the peace accused of misconduct should be suspended seven months without pay, a judicial review panel says.

The three-judge panel found that Mark Dobronski repeatedly demonstrated improper behavior and denied having done so in some cases "in the face of strong contradictory testimony."

One instance was making a joke about a Hispanic man's name in open court in July 1999, the panel said.

Further, Dobronski "oftentimes overreacted in dismissing charges with prejudice, denying persons the right to be heard according to law, dangling handcuffs in front of defendants, threatening persons, including attorneys, with contempt, and making quick decisions which would appear to have been done in order to clear the court's calendar and-or move cases along quickly," the judges wrote.

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Neither Dobronski nor his lawyer could be reached for comment Friday.

The review was prompted by more than 30 complaints filed against Dobronski.

Besides recommending three-month suspension for the racial comment, the panel recommended that Dobronski receive advisory letters for eight of the charges and censure on seven others. It also tacked on an additional four-month, unpaid suspension.

The panel recommended dropping 15 of accusations, and the prosecution dismissed four.

The panel is part of the 11-member Commission on Judicial Conduct that will consider its recommendations. The Arizona Supreme Court will have the final say, probably after late October.

Dobronski was elected in November 1998 and took office in January 1999. The commission brought the misconduct charges against him in March and he has been reassigned to "nonjudicial" duties.

Dobronski faces another week of hearings beginning Oct. 15 for a second set of misconduct charges the commission brought.

— Arizona Daily Sun